

From: Churchill, Hon. Zach
Sent: Thursday, February 26, 2015 1:19 PM
To: 'cathycrouse@eastlink.ca'
Cc: MacNeil, Patricia B (DNR)
Subject: Re; meeting on February 11, 2015 -concerns about the Ingramport harvest (DNR Log # 2015-81)

Ms. Cathy Crouse, Chair
St. Margaret's Bay Stewardship Association
Box 3081
Tantallion, NS B3Z 4G9
cathycrouse@eastlink.ca

Dear Ms. Crouse:

I am responding to your e-mail regarding our meeting on February 11, 2015. I want to thank you for bringing your concerns about the Ingramport harvest to our attention and I am pleased that we had an opportunity to discuss those concerns.

The management plan for the Rossignol, St. Margarets Bay, North Mountain District, which includes the St. Margarets Bay lands, is in draft form and will be released in the coming months. A copy will be sent to your association. As with all forest management plans, it will continue to be updated in the future.

All of the sites of concern fall within the 'Multiple Values Zone' in the Western Crown conceptual plan and we believe we have achieved a balanced approach. As noted in the Natural Resources Strategy, clearcutting is one of the two main harvesting methods to be used in Nova Scotia.

As I committed at the meeting, we have reviewed the comments that you made and other input that we have received regarding the harvest sites at Ingramport.

In particular, we took into account the information concerning the need for compatibility with tourism activity. Harvested sites do present a short-term visual impact. Our decision process has taken into account the need for sensitivity about view planes and the need to spread harvesting out over time to minimize the impact.

We reviewed all the proposed harvest areas in the Ingramport area between Highways 103 and 3, which were posted online last fall. As a result of that review, we have made the following decisions:

- Harvests on four of the proposed areas will not proceed at this time:
 - Area 222 and 223 (posted as a clearcut on October 28, 2014);

- Area 221 (posted as a partial harvest on October 28, 2014 and reposted as a clearcut on January 12, 2015 following the pre-treatment assessment); and
 - Area 537 (posted as a partial harvest on November 18, 2014 and reposted as a clearcut on January 12, 2015 following the pre-treatment assessment).
- The southern boundary of Area 219 will be moved further away from Highway 3 to reduce the visual impact from the highway and the walking trail.
- Two areas will be harvested as proposed:
 - Area 220 (posted as a clearcut on October 28, 2014); and
 - Area 219 (posted as a partial harvest on October 28, 2014 and reposted as a clearcut on January 12, 2015 following the pre-treatment assessment).

Our collective interaction has had positive outcomes. Based on community and other stakeholder input, our government changed the designation for this zone from Resource Management as identified by the previous government, to one of Multiple Values.

Ours is the first Nova Scotia government to make harvest information available to the public and to solicit community feedback on proposed harvests. As part of our ongoing commitment to greater transparency, we intend to post pre-treatment assessments on the department website by the end of 2015. Details on the pre-treatment assessment process can be found at <http://novascotia.ca/natr/forestry/programs/timberman/pta.asp>. As well, the registry we mentioned is now in operation and people have been signing up. It can be found at <http://novascotia.ca/natr/forestry/fibre-allocation/map-signup.asp>.

As mentioned at the meeting, Patricia MacNeil will contact Geoff LeBoutillier to review the public engagement process.

Thank you for your continued interest in forest management on Crown lands in Nova Scotia. Your input has led to a direct change in the prescribed treatment for this area. It is this sort of public feedback that our new process is designed to achieve.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Zach Churchill
Minister of Natural Resources

c Patricia MacNeil, Executive Director, Policy, Planning and Support Services

